

14p

THE
WANTON WIFE,
A
COMEDY,
IN
TWO ACTS,

AS PERFORMED.

At the THEATRE in SMOCK-ALLEY.

Taken from MOLIERE and D'ANCOURT.

By Mr. BETTERTON:

What he has been, tho' present praise be dumb,
Shall haply be a THEME in times to come,
As now we talk of ROSCIUS, and of Rome.

Rowe.

DUBLIN:

Printed by WILLIAM SLEATER, Bookseller, at
Pope's Head on Cork - Hill.

M DCC LXII.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Barnaby Brittle,	- -	Mr. BROWN.
Mr. Lovemore,	- -	Mr. HEAPHY.
Mr. Cunningham,	-	Mr. PHILLIPS.
Sir Peter Pride,	- -	Mr. KNIVETON.
Clodpole,	- - - -	Mr. WAKER.
Jeffery,	- - - -	Mr. SHEPHARD.
Jeremy,	- - - -	Master LEWIS.

W O M E N.

Mrs. Brittle,	- - -	Mrs. ABINGTON.
Damaris,	- - - -	Miss AMBROSE.
Lady Pride,	- - -	Miss ROCHE.

THE
WANTON WIFE.

A C T I.

SCENE, *Brittle's House, &c.*

Enter *Lovemore* and *Cunningham*.

Cunningham.

HOW is it, *Lovemore*? — Well — what subtle Business brings you hither now?

Love. 'Tis Love, my Boy, I have an Intrigue here.

Cun. You an Intrigue! With whom?

Love. With pretty Mrs. *Brittle*, the Glassman's Wife that's Landlord of this House.

Cun. Give you good Fortune, Friend.

Love. *Damaris*, her Chambermaid, I have already won, who gives me all the Encouragement I can wish for: She says the Husband's jealous to Distraction, and that his Wife loves Company and Courtship most extremely.

Cun. Very well, you have Ground enough to work on.

Love. I have a Letter ready, which I must get convey'd to *Damaris*, she'll give it to her Mistress, and send me an Answer instantly: Shall I employ *Jeffery*?

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Cun. Yes, here he is, he'll do't dexterously ; fare-well, Friend, I'll follow my new-made Viscount, while he is entertaining the old Lady, I may have an Occasion offer'd me of talking with my Mistress. [*Ex.*]

Love. *Jeffery* ?

Jeff. Sir !

Love. Thou can'st convey this Letter very privately ?

Jeff. To one you are in Love with—Is't not so ?

Love. You are in the Right.

Jeff. Is she Wife, Widow or Maid, Sir ?

Love. The Truth is, *Jeffery*, 'tis a Citizen's fair Wife, the prettiest little Rogue—

Jeff. Do you think this Life will last for ever, Sir ? Does nothing come amiss to you ? Shall no Condition 'scape you ?

Love. Good wife *Jeffery*, spare your Counsel, and deliver my Letter for me—Take it.

Jeff. Do not trust me, Sir, I say, do not trust me, I have a damnable squeamish Stomach, and I shall spoil this bawdy Business : Therefore do not trust me.

Love. What ails the Fellow ?

Jeff. I have a Mind to marry, but I have no Mind to be a Cuckold, Sir.

Love. Why, thou a Cuckold, Fool ?

Jeff. If I carry this Letter, Sir, and you make a Beast of this honest Citizen, then I am partly the Occasion on't ; and ought not I in Conscience to expect the same Return when I am marry'd, Sir ? If I by Accident should see a young brisk Gal'ant with my Wife, I should presently conclude that he has done the same for me ; therefore, I say again, do not trust me.

Love. Well, *Jeffery*, the Truth is, I have no such Design : I wou'd not believe thy Master when he told me how scrupulous thou wert, and feign'd this Story for a Trial only : Farewell, honest *Jeffery*.

[*Exit Jeffery.*]

I had been in a very fine Condition had I trusted this Rascal with my Mistress's Name ; as sure as Fate, the Rogue would have betray'd me. But what's to be

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be done now? which Way shall I get this Letter convey'd to *Damaris*? Eh! is not that *Clodpole* my Tenant? Egad a lucky Thought; he's a simple, honest Fellow, and will be glad to serve me.

Enter *Clodpole*.

He shall do it.—Ha! *Clodpole*, how dost thou?

Clod. Pratty well and thank your Worship.

Love. Well, *Clodpole*, and what brings thee to Town?

Clod. Why, you must know, Sir, I came only to see a Sweetheart of mine, one *Damaris*, that lives there at that House, whom I have had a kindness for some Time; but she's plaguy cross and ill-natur'd to me.

Love. And does she live there, at that House?

Clod. Yes, Sir.

Love. Then, honest *Clodpole*, I must beg you to do me a small Kindness.

Clod. That I will, Measter—what is it?

Love. Only to deliver this Letter to *Damaris* your Mistress — she knows what to do with it.

Clod. Troth will I, and that directly.

Love. But be sure to keep this secret, and don't let any one know you have brought any Letter or Message from me.

Clod. O Measter, never fear *Clodpole*. Icod I'm no Fool—they must be devilish cunning that gets any thing out me—I can tell un that.

Love. Well, go then—and if you perform this discreetly, I shall leave a Couple of Guineas with my Servant for you.

Clod. Thank you kindly, Measter: I warrant you. Icod this is a good Morning's Work.

[Exit into the House.]

Love. Well, Success to you.—Gad so, here's the Husband.

Enter *Brittle*.

Your Servant, Mr. *Brittle*.

Brit. Your Friend and *Bornaby*.

Love. Is the Lady *Laycock* in her Chamber?

Brit. Yes, Sir.

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Love. I am going to wait upon her—Farewell.

[*Exit.*

Brit. These Gallants flock to this old rich Widow, and make more Noise about her, than a Kennel of Hounds about a Carcass of Carrion: My House is grown as common as the Exchange or the Playhouses where all Sorts of Company meet to laugh and talk wantonly; it makes me mad, stark mad to think on't: I must marry a Gentlewoman, with a Murrian to me; and fill my House with her proud, vain Kindred, that infect my Wife with their loose, lascivious Principles. Well, *Barnaby Brittle*, you have nobody to thank but yourself for this: You must marry above your Quality, and now you see the Effect on't.

Enter *Mrs. Brittle*.

How now, Wife, whither away so fast?

Wife. I am going to *Ranelagh* Gardens with my Cousin *Philadelphia*.

Brit. To *Ranelagh* Gardens!

Wife. Yes, and thence to see a Play, where we shall have such Sport.

Brit. How! Sport! Wife.

Wife. 'Tis the pleasantest Thing in the whole World to have a Flock of wild Gallants fluttering about two or three Ladies; and then they talk to 'em most wantonly, and so loud that they put the very Players out of Countenance.—'Tis a better Entertainment than any Part of the Play can be.

Brit. Pray stay a little: Why, now, is this a Dress for *Barnaby Brittle's* Wife?

Wife. No; but 'tis a Dress for a Gentlewoman, for Sir *Peter Pride's* Daughter, Sir: You'd have me wear a plain bombazeen Gown, with my Set hood, my Pendants, and my Ear-knots hanging over 'em; or at best a pitiful Doyley-petticoat: I know better Things, I thank you, Sir.—Good-by, I'm afraid my Cousin stays for me.

[*Going.*

Brit. Hold, Wife, if you please, you shall not go.

Wife. Indeed, Husband, if you please, I will go.

Brit. Truly, my pretty-fac'd Wife, I shall make you tarry.

Wife. Truly, my sweet-fac'd Husband, you cannot, nor you shall not.

Brit.

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Brit. Indeed, I shall.

Wife. Indeed, you shall not.

Brit. With your Permission, I shall make you keep me Company this Afternoon.

Wife. This Afternoon!

Brit. Yes, this Afternoon.

Wife. I ask your Pardon for that, sweet Husband.

Brit. And I ask your's, dear Wife.

Wife. It cannot be.

Brit. It shall be.

Wife. No.

Brit. Yes.

Wife. I tell you, no.

Brit. I tell you, yes.

Wife. You shall not force me to't.

Brit. But I shall, if you provoke me.

Wife. Well, set your Heart at Rest; I will go, and stay me if you can or dare.

Brit. Hast thou the Impudence to say this to my Face! Do not provoke me, do not.

Wife. Where's the Danger, pray?

Brit. Do not force me to use you worse than I intended.

Wife. The worst you cou'd do you have done already; you marry'd me against my Will, and do you think I will not be reveng'd for't?

Brit. Hold that damnable Tongue of your's, or I shall do you a Mischief; the Devil tempts me to it strangely.

Wife. Do your worst, I defy you: I am a Gentlewoman on both Sides; by the Father descended from the honourable Family of the *Prides*, by the Mother from the worshipful Family of the *Laycocks*; and shall I suffer an under Citizen, a pitiful Glassman, to make a Slave of me?

Brit. Peace, Peace, I say.

Wife. 'Tis true, he's in the Road of Preferment now, he has been Scavenger, and, in Time, may come to be Churchwarden, and rob the Poor; or to the highest Point of Honour, to be a Common-council-man, and march in Triumph on a Lord-mayor's



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mayor's Day, or sail in a new-trimm'd Dung-boat to *Westminster*, almost as ridiculous and foppish as riding the Fringes.

Brit. Come, do not abuse the City, do not.

Wife. I might have marry'd a Merchant, and have had my glass Coach and my little Chariot, my Women and my Footboys in Liveries; have had as much Plate, as good Jewels, and as rich Clothes, as the best Lady about the Court; and did I lose all this, and marry a sneaking Glassman that will not allow me Christian Liberty? My Comfort is, I have Parents that will not see me wrong'd; they are now with my Cousin *Laycock*. — I'll to my Lady Mother, she shall know how I'm us'd by you. *[Exit.]*

Brit. What shall I do? — I shall be damnably tormented with this Father and Mother of her's. — The Mischief is, when I do complain, they believe all she says (tho' ne'er so false) and face me down that I am in the Wrong still: Then the Mother is so proud of her pragmatikal Honour (as all new-made Ladies are) and looks for so much Respect forsooth, that 'tis intolerable. Well, Gentlefolks, of Birth and Quality, forsooth, may be fine People for aught I know: But I wish it had been high Treason for them to marry any-body but one another: I am sure I have my Belly full of them; I have a Wife that turns up her Nose at her honest Neighbours when they civilly call her by my Name; that thinks all my Wealth too little to purchase the honourable Title of her Husband; a Title that with all my Heart I wou'd give double the Sum to get rid of. — My own House is a Hell to me; I never come home but the Devil, in the Shape of some Vexation or other, is got hither before me. — Why, look, there he is now.

Enter Clodpole.

Brit. What the Devil has that Fellow been doing there?

Clod. How that Man eyes me!

Brit. I am sure he does not know me.

Clod. Is he not a Spy, set to watch me? He saw me come forth from the Glassman's House, and may discover me.

Brit.

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Brit. I'll spake to him. — A good Day to you, Friend.

Clod. The like to you, Sir.

Brit. You do not dwell in this House, Friend; do you?

Clod. No, Sir, no; I only come to prepare an Entertainment for to-morrow.

Brit. For to-morrow! Tell me who makes it, will you?

Clod. Mum!

Brit. Who?

Clod. Peace.

Brit. What do'st thou mean? Thou can'st out of that House.

Clod. You must not tell it tho'

Brit. Why?

Clod. Good Lord! because.

Brit. Of what?

Clod. Softly——I am afraid we shall be overheard.

Brit. No, never fear it, Man.

Clod. The Business I came for was to deliver a Letter to the Mistress of that House, in the Behalf of a fine young Gentleman: But no-body must know of this——you understand me?

Brit. Yes, yes.

Clod. For look you, I was charg'd not to be seen when I came forth, therefore do not discover me.

Brit. I warrant you.

Clod. I can be very secret when I am commanded, Sir.

Brit. Yes, yes, I find you can.

Clod. Her Husband, they say, is the jealousist Coxcomb in the whole City; so ill-natur'd a Fellow that he deserves not to have Love made to his Wife. If this shou'd come to his Knowledge, Sir, he'd play the Devil——you understand me?

Brit. Yes, yes, very well.

Clod. He must know nothing of all this.

Brit. No, no.

Clod. They'll cozen him, and do it privately——you understand me?

Brit.

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Brit. I, I, no-body better : But what's the Gentleman's Name, Friend ?

Clod. I can never remember these hard Names — I think he is call'd Mr. *Love*——I, I, Mr. *Love*more. —He has a brave Estate in our Country, Sir.

Brit. O, I know him very well ; he lodges at —

Clod. The Draper's over the Way.

Brit. The very same.

Clod. I assure you he is the honestest Gentleman I ever was acquainted with ; he gave me this Piece of Gold only to carry the Letter to this Gentlewoman. Truly, Sir, we meet with few such Jobbs as these in the Country.

Brit. Well, have you delivered it to the Lady ?

Clod. Yes, yes, and there's one *Damaris*, a notable Girl, I warrant her ; she knew my Business before I spake to her : She carry'd me to her Mistress instantly.

Brit. Ah ! damn'd Witch !

Clod. In troth that *Damaris* is a very pretty Wench : The Match between us is half made, for I am willing ; there wants but her Consent.

Brit. You'll soon have that, to be sure.—What Answer made the Gentlewoman to the young Gallant's Letter ?

Clod. She bid me tell him——Stay, can I remember it ? that she was very much oblig'd to him for his Kindness to her, and desired him to appoint some Place where they might safely meet, and be very careful that her Husband did not discover 'em.

Brit. O vile Woman !

[*Aside.*

Clod. For you must know, the Cuckold her Husband is very suspicious of her—you understand me ?

Brit. Extremely well.

Clod. In good Faith 'twill be very pleasant ; for he must know none of their private Meetings : You understand me ?

Brit. I, I, to a Tittle.

Clod. Then he will be fitted for his Jealousy : — Will it not be very pleasant ?

Erit. Yes, certainly.

Clod.

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Clod. Farewel — mum! — not a Word of this: Be sure you keep this secret from the Husband — you understand me?

Brit. Never doubt me.

Clod. For my Part, I'll make as if I knew nothing of it: I can be cunning when I have a Mind to it: They shall get nothing out of me, I warrant 'em: — You understand me? Farewell. *[Exit.*

Brit. Good-by. — Well, *Barnaby Brittle*, now you find how your Wife uses you! this 'tis to marry a Gentlewoman: She may play you a thousand impudent Tricks, and her Gentility forsooth shall bear her out in't: Had she been a good honest Tradesman's Daughter, I might have taken the Liberties of the City, and have drubb'd her from *Wapping* to *Westminster*. — A wicked Jade! to promise a Meeting to a wild young Fellow, that will make no more of — O Due! I'll not endure it; I'll complain to her Parents instantly: Now they shall see I have Reason for my Jealousy — and here they come most opportunely for't.

Enter Sir Peter Pride and Lady.

Sir Pet. You seem disorder'd, Son! Pray what's the Matter now?

Brit. I am mad, stark mad!

Lady. Good Lord, Son, where were you bred, that you use us with no more Respect? Is that Hat of yours nail'd on?

Brit. Faith, Mother in-law, I have other Things to trouble my Head withal.

Lady. Is it not possible, Son, to teach you how to behave yourself to Persons of our Quality?

Brit. Pray, Mother-in-law, forbear your Instructions now.

Lady. Again! will you never leave that ill-bred Trick of calling me Mother-in-law? Is it not as easy for you to say Madam?

Brit. 'Slife, if you call me Son-in-law, I know no Reason why I may not call you Mother-in-law.

Lady. Yes, there are many Reasons; if you do not know 'em, I'll instruct you, Son: Tho' I am your Mother-

Mother-in-law, yet 'tis not fit for you to use that Word to a Person of my Quality; there's a great Difference 'tween you and me; Pray know yourself, and keep your Distance too.

Sir Pet. Enough, Love, say no more on't.

Lady. Good Lord, *Sir Peter*, you are the strangest Man in the whole World, you make every one so familiar with you, they never give you that Respect that's due to you.

Sir Pet. Forbear your Instructions; I have shew'd by several Actions of my Life that I am not one that will lose any thing that belongs to me; therefore, Son-in-law, proceed methodically, tell me the Business.

Brit. Well, since I must, I'll tell you methodically—*Sir Peter*—

Sir Pet. Softly, Son-in-law; know 'tis ill-breeding to call Parsons of my Birth and Education by their Names: To those above us we should say, to the Ladies, Madam, to the Men, Sir, short.

Brit. Why then, Sir, short (if you'll have it so) my Wife makes me——

Sir Pet. Nay, but Son, know you must not say your Wife, when you speak of our Daughter, Son.

Brit. Lord! will you make me still madder? Is not my Wife, my Wife?

Sir Pet. Yes, Son-in-law, she is your Wife; but 'tis not fit you shou'd call her so: You cou'd do no more if you were married to your Equal.

Brit. Puh! what a Rout and a Fuss is here? the Devil take all Ceremonies; for the Love of Goodness lay your Gentility aside, and give me Leave to speak what I have a mind to:—— I tell you I am ill satisfy'd with my Marriage.

Sir Pet. Your Reason, Son-in-law?

Lady. Are you displeas'd with what you have gain'd so much by?

Brit. Gain'd! Madam (since it must be Madam) What have I gain'd? 'twas well for you, you met with such a Fool, else your Gentility had been in the Mire: I am sure my Money has stop'd many a Gap: That's all I gain'd by it, Madam.

Sir

Sir Pet. Do you think it no Advantage then to be ally'd to the honourable Family of the *Prides*?

Lady. And to the worshiptul Family of the *Laycocks*? whence I, Son, had the Honour to be deriv'd; a noble Family that will make all your Children Gentlemen.

Brit. Yes, yes, I believe my Children may be Gentlemen, for they're like to be of a Gentleman's Getting: But I shall be a Cuckold, Madam, unless Order be taken speedily.

Sir Pet. Pray, Son, explain yourself: We will not maintain her in ill Actions: We'll be the first shall do you Justice on her.

Lady. Well, 'tis very strange! She was brought up with all Severity imaginable.

Brit. There's a young Gentleman makes Love to her, and she receives his Courtship: This Gallant, under Pretence of visiting my Lady *Laycock*, your Kinswoman, who lodges in my House, watches for all Occasions to corrupt her, Madam.

Lady. By this good Day, I had rather strangle her with my own Hands than she shou'd stain the Honour of her Family.

Sir Pet. And I'll run my Sword thro' her and her Gallant, if she forfeits her Reputation.

Brit. I have told you what's past, and desire you to take it into your Consideration, Sir.

Sir Pet. 'Tis well known I have Courage, Son: I'll call this Gallant to account for this. But are you sure all this is true?

Brit. Ay, ay, too sure on't.

Sir Pet. Have a Care, Son; for these are ticklish Points, and ought not to be dally'd with.

Brit. All I have told you is a certain Truth.

Sir Pet. Go you, Love, and talk with your Daughter, while my Son-in-law and I seek out this amorous Gallant.—[*Exit Lady P.*]—Follow me, Son, and you shall see how vigorously I'll manage this Affair.

Enter Lovemore.

Brit. Here he comes, Sir, to save you the Trouble of seeking him.

B

Sir

Sir Pet. Do you know me, Sir ?

Love. No, Sir, not that I well remember.

Sir Pet. I am call'd Sir *Peter Pride*, Sir.

Love. I am glad to hear it, Sir.

Sir Pet. I am known at Court, I had the Honour in my Youth to behave myself gallantly in the late civil Wars ; I was in every Battle that was fought in the Kingdom, from *Edgehill* to *Naseby*.

Love. Very good, Sir.

Sir Pet. My Father, Sir *John Pride*, had the Honour to command in Person at the famous Battle of *Lutzen*, where the great *Gustavus* fell : My Grandfather, Sir *Alexander Pride*, was so considerable in his Time that he had Permission granted him by the Parliament to sell his Land and follow Capt. *Drake* to the *West-indies*.

Love. Sir, I believe all this.

Sir Pet. Now, know, Sir, I am inform'd that you make Love to a young Gentlewoman for whom I am concern'd, because she is my Daughter, Sir ; and this Man you see here has the Honour to be marry'd to her : I am glad I have found you, to know of you the Bottom of this Business.

Love. Pray, Sir, who told you this ?

Sir Pet. One that knows it to be true, Sir.

Love. Whoe'er reported this of me was a Rascal : Tell me his Name — I'll cut the Villain's Tongue out.

Brit. O Lrd ! what will become of me now !

Love. This, Sir, you say, is the Gentlewoman's Husband ?

Sir Pet. Yes, Sir, 'twas he made this Complaint to me.

Love. You ! Sir ; did you ? — 'Tis well you have the Honour to be related to Sir *Peter Pride*, else I shou'd teach you what it were to raise such Reports of me.

Enter Lady *Pride*, Wife and *Damaris*.

Lady P. Well, Jealousy's a very troublesome Thing : I bring my Daughter to clear herself in the Face of the whole World.

Love.

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Love. Was it you, Madam, that told your Husband I made Love to you?

Wife. I! Sir—pray how shou'd I tell him so? you never spoke to me before, that I remember.

Lady P. Look you there! I knew she was abus'd.

Wife. But since I am suspected, I will not be suspected, Sir, for nothing; if you do love me, Sir, pursue it, you shall find me willing to entertain you: And pray let me advise you, Sir, to teach your Servant more Discretion when you employ him next; and when you write, be sure to send it when my Husband's absent: And when you have a Mind to court me, Sir, you need but come, and on my Word I will receive your Visit as I ought.

Love. Pray be not so hasty, Madam, you need not give me these Instructions, nor scandalize yourself thus to no Purpose: Pray, Madam, who says I am in Love with you?

Wife. The Company you see here: I know nothing but what they tell me, Sir.

Love. They, Macam, may say their Pleasures; but you best know if once I made Love to you.

Wife. If you had, you shou'd have been welcome, Sir.

Love. Alas! Madam, you need not be afraid of me; 'tis not my Nature to debauch young Ladies: I have more Respect for you, and more Reverence for your brave Father and your honourable Mother, to have the least Thought of abusing you.

Lady P. Now, Son, do you hear this?

Sir Pet. Are you yet satisfy'd? What say you now?

Brit. I say it is all damn'd Cunning: And since I must speak, 'tis not Half an Hour since she receiv'd a Letter from him.

Wife. Did I receive a Letter from him?

Love. Or did I send her one?

Wife. Damaris, is this true?

Dam. O! Sir, I never heard a falser Thing.

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Brit. Hold your Peace, Carrion, I know your Tricks too well: You were to have introduc'd this Gallant.

Dam. Who, I?

Brit. Yes, Hussy, you.

Dam. How full of Malice is this wicked World! to suspect me for such a Thing, me who am Innocence itself!

Brit. Hold your Tongue, Baggage.

Dam. Shall I endure this, Madam?

Brit. Peace, or I shall cudgel your Hide for you. — You are not a Gentleman's Daughter — I may do what I will with you.

Wife. This is such an Abuse, I have not Power to answer him: Well, 'tis a horrible Thing that a Husband shou'd have so little Grace to accuse his own Wife, because she does nothing to him, but what she ought. Alas! If I am to be blam'd for any Thing, 'tis for loving him too well.

Dam. So it is, Madam.

Wife. Ay, *Damaris*, that's my greatest Misfortune. I wish 'twere in my Nature to entertain a Gallant, I were not then to be lamented so much: But to be thus wrongfully accus'd, who can endure it? I will not tarry to be abus'd thus. [Exit.]

Lady P. Go, jealous Coxcomb, go: Thou do'st not deserve to have such an honest Woman to thy Wife.

Dam. No, Madam, he deserves to be made what he fears to be: Truly, Sir, I think you ought to make Love to my Mistress, if 'twere for nothing but to punish him: If I were in your Place, I am sure I wou'd; and since he has accus'd me, do it, Sir; I promise you, you shall have my Assistance.

Sir Pet. Truly, Son, you deserve all this they threaten you with: Your ridiculous Behaviour sets all the World against you.

Lady P. Go, Clown, and learn to use a Gentlewoman better. Let's hear no more of such Complaints,

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plaints, I'd wish you. I'll follow her, my Dear, and comfort her. *[Exit.]*

Sir Pet. Do, my Lady.

Brit. Why, this is the Devil, to be in the Wrong when a Man's in the Right; but can I get no-body to believe me!

Love. You see how unjustly I have been accus'd, Sir: You are a Man of Honour: I demand Satisfaction of you for this Affront I have receiv'd.

Sir Pet. 'Tis but just, and you shall have it, Sir. Come, Son, give the Gentleman Satisfaction.

Brit. Satisfaction, Sir, for what?

Sir Pet. For accusing him thus falsely.

Brit. I don't believe I have accus'd him falsely.

Sir Pet. That's all 'one, he denies it, and 'tis enough if a Gentleman unsays what he has said.

Brit. Very well! if I find him in Bed with my Wife, and he denies it, I must ask him Forgiveness: Do you mean so?

Sir Pet. No more Delays, but do as I command you.

Brit. Um! What will you have me do?

Sir Pet. Trust me, you shall not do too much First take off your Hat, for he's a Gentleman and you are none.

Brit. 'Sdeath! will you distract me, Sir?

Sir Pet. Do it, I say—that's well—Say after me, Sir—

Brit. Sir.

Sir Pet. I ask your Pardon.

Brit. I ask your Pardon.

Sir Pet. For the ill Thoughts I had of you.

Brit. For the ill Thoughts I had of you.

Sir Pet. I had not then the Honour to be known to you.

Brit. I had not then the Honour to be known to you.

Sir Pet. But now, Sir, I beseech you to believe—

Brit. But now, Sir, I beseech you to believe—

Sir Pet. That I am for ever, Sir, your humble Servant.

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Brit. How ! your humble Servant to him who wou'd make me a Cuckold, Sir ?

Sir Pet. How's this !

Lowe. 'Tis enough, Sir—I am satisfy'd.

Sir Pet. No, Sir, he shall say it in Form—— that I am for ever your humble Servant—

Brit. That I am for ever your humble Servant.

[*Exit.*

Lowe. I am yours with all my Heart, Sir; and will forget what's past; I have troubled you too much.—Your Servant, Sir.

Sir Pet. Sir, your humble Servant.—Now I hope you see my Son is match'd in a Family that will not see him wrong'd.

[*Exit.*

Lowe. This Mistress of mine is the prettiest Rogue that ever I was acquainted with : And yet her Wit is more surprising than her Beauty : To fool her Father, Mother and Husband ; to declare her Love to me before their Faces, and give me Instructions how to behave myself in my Amour, is a Pleasure above Expression.

[*Exit.*

SCENE, a Chamber in BRITTLE's House.

Enter *Clodpole* and *Damaris*.

Dam. I quest at first this Business came from you.

Clod. In good Faith, *Damaris*, I only spoke two or three Words to a Man that saw me come out of your House, to desire him not to speak of it, and he betray'd me. — Your Neighbours are horribly given to prating.

Dam. Mr. *Lovemore* made an excellent Choice when he pickt you out for an Ambassador ; he's like to make a successful Treaty on't.

Clod. Hereafter I'll be cunninger, and take more Care.

Dam. Indeed, 'tis Time.

Clod. Pristhee no more of that.—Hear me a little.

Dam. What shou'd I hear ?

Clod. Turn thy Face towards me.

Dam

Dam. Well, Sir, what now?

Clod. *Damaris*, Mistress *Damaris*!

Dam. What ail'st thou?

Clod. Can'st thou not guess what I wou'd say to thee?

Dam. No, by my Troth, not I.

Clod. Why then I love thee, *Damaris*.

Dam. Indeed!

Clod. Yes, indeed, do I, or the Devil take me — I hope you'll believe me when I swear?

Dam. In good Time.

Clod. I never look upon thee but my Heart jolts in my Stomach, like a Cart in an uneven Way. — You understand me.

Dam. An excellent Simile!

Clod. What do'st thou do to make thyself look so prettily?

Dam. No more than others do.

Clod. We won't make much ado about this Business; but if thou wilt marry me— [*Goes to kiss her.*]

Dam. Stand off, or I shall box you.

Clod. Cruel, savage, barbarous, inhuman Creature!

Dam. Be gone, and tell him I'll deliver his Letter carefully.

Clod. Farewell Flint, Pebble, Rock, Marble, or any Thing that's harder. [*Exit.*]

Dam. Here she comes with her Husband—I must hide myself 'till he is gone. [*Exit.*]

Enter *Brittle* and *Wife*.

Brit. No, no, Madam, I am not so easily deceiv'd; I am sure the Complaint I made was very true: I have better Eyes than you imagine, and can see through all your Disguises, Mistress.

Enter *Love* more behind.

Love. Yonder she is, how prettily she looks! — 'Sdeath! there's her Husband.

Brit. I find how little Respect you have for the sacred Knot that ties us.—Nay, leave your impertinent Courtesying; that's not the Respect I am talking of; therefore do not make Sport with it.

[*Love* more makes *Love* to her, by Signs, behind her Husband's Back, which she returns. *Wife.*]

20 THE WANTON WIFE.

Wife. Pray, what do I make Sport with ?

Brit. I see it well enough — Look there—I know you stand upon your Gentility, and think me much below you—Again—No more of this Foolery—The Respect I meant was not to my Person but to the sacred Tie of Matrimony—Ah ! you need not shrug up your Shoulders — 'Tis no slight Thing as you make it, Mistress.

Wife. I shrug up my Shoulders !

Brit. I saw you well enough : I tell you again, Marriage is a sacred Thing, and ought to be more esteem'd with you than it is : 'Tis a burning Shame you shou'd abuse it so ; — do not toss your Head nor make Mouths at me, do not.

Wife. I know not what you mean.

Brit. You mock me, because I was not born a Gentleman ; but we have no Whores in our Family ; the *Brittles* were always counted honest.

Love. If he shou'd catch me here I shou'd spoil all. I find by the Signs she makes she'd have me gone. — 'Tis the prettiest, wittiest Rogue, in *Christendom*.

[*Aside.*

Wife. Prithee, Dear, be not so jealous of me.

Brit. Pray, mend your Manners then.

Wife. You shall, Love, allow me a little Freedom, indeed you shall : What Harm is it now and then to take the Air in *Hyde-park*, in my Lady *Laycock's* Coach ; to go with 'em to a Play or a Ball ? — Alas ! I mean no Harm.

Love. She waves her Hand to have me gone ; it I stay longer now I shall offend her.

[*Aside.*

[*Exit, making a Noise in shutting the Door.*

Brit. Ha ! what Noise was that ?

Wife. You are afraid of your own Shadow, are you ?

Brit. Here you suffer a wild young Fellow to come after you.

Wife. Is it my Fault ? What wou'd you have me do ?

Brit. I wou'd have you do as an honest Woman shou'd do, that means to please nobody but her own Husband :

Husband : I am sure no Gallant follows any Woman long without Encouragement : There's a certain Wantonneſs in the Face, with languishing Eyes and dying Looks, which draws 'em as a Honeypot draws Waſps. But modeſt Women ſend 'em away quickly.

Wife. Why ſhou'd I ſend any Gentleman away ? I think it no Scandal, nor am I offended with any Man that thinks me handſome ; no, on the contrary, I am pleas'd with it.

Brit. And what Part plays the poor Husband, when the Wife loves Courtſhip ?

Wife. The Part of an honeſt Man, that's glad to ſee his Wife ſo conſiderable, to gain the Eſteem of ſuch fine, ſuch well-bred Gentlemen.

Brit. Your Servant, Madam, that won't do my Buſineſs : The *Brittles* never yet were accuſtom'd to that Mode.

Wife. But the *Brittles* may accuſtom themſelves to it, if they pleaſe : For my Part, I declare it publicly, I have no Deſign yet to renounce the World, to be bury'd alive with a Husband : Do you think becauſe we are marry'd, we muſt inſtantly break off all Commerce with the Living, and be dead to all the Pleaſures of the World ? No, no, the Tyranny of Huſbands is intolerable : To think we ſhould die to all others and only live to them ? I do ſo ! No ; I am reſolv'd I will not die ſo young.

Brit. Do you remember the Promiſes you made me in the Church ?

Wife. I made none willingly ; you forc'd them from me. You aſk my Conſent if I wou'd marry you ? No ; you only aſk'd my Father's and Mother's ; and you'd do well only to complain to them of the Wrong which may be done you ; and ſince I never told you I wou'd marry you, and you did it without conſulting me, I do not think myſelf oblig'd to be your Slave, ſtill ſubject to your Will : No, I am reſolv'd to live pleaſantly whiſt my Youth laſts, and take all Liberty my Age requires : I'll ſee the World, have the Pleaſure to be courted as well as others are.

Prepare

22 THE WANTON WIFE.

Prepare yourself henceforth to suffer it, and thank Heaven if I do no worse.

Brit. Very fine! I am your Husband, and tell you I do not understand such vile, lewd Doings.

Wife. And I am your Wife, and tell you I do understand 'em, and mean to practise 'em.

Brit. She is so wickedly provoking that if I stay any longer, I shall certainly do it. — Come, come your Ways to bed: Follow me directly. [*Exit.*

Enter *Damaris*.

Dam. Ah! Madam, I was impatient till he was gone, that I might deliver this Letter to you — You know from whom it comes.

Wife. Give it me, *Damaris*.

Dam. I find he understood your Meaning, Madam.

Wife. Ah! *Damaris*, how rarely this Gallant expresses himself in this Letter: Well, these Courtiers, in their Discourse, their Writings, and their Miens, have a strange agreeable Air: What pitiful Creatures these Citizens are to 'em.

Dam. I believe the Brittles have not pleas'd you much since your Acquaintance with these Gentlemen.

Wife. Stay here, I'll write an Answer, and return instantly. [*Exit.*



A C T

A C T II.

SCENE, the Street.

Enter *Clodpole* and *Lovemore*.*Clodpole.*

SIR, Mrs. *Damaris* bid me tell you, if you can get away the Company, her Mistress will come hither to you instantly.—Is not the Night very unkind, Sir, to be so dark?

Love. Quite contrary; it hinders me, *Clodpole*, from being seen.

Clod. That's right: But how comes it to be so dark?

Love. Thou art very inquisitive.

Clod. If I had been a Scholar I should have thought of Things that never had been thought on, Sir, before.

Love. I believe so, for thou talk'st now like a Philosopher. Is *Damaris* very kind to thee?

Clod. I am, Sir, ———

Love. Hush! I hear 'em coming, *Clodpole*.

Enter *Wife* and *Damaris*.

Wife. *Damaris*?

Dam. Madam.

Wife. Leave the Door half open.

Dam. I have so, Madam.

Love. Where are you, my fair Mistress.

Wife. Here, Mr. *Lovemore*.

Love. Let me kiss this pretty Hand of yours.

Wife. Now we are safe; my Husband is asleep, Sir.

Love. Let us retire into the next Porch, Madam; here we shall have more Convenience.

Wife.

24 THE WANTON WIFE.

Wife. Lead me, Sir.—Come, *Damaris*.

[*Exeunt Wife, Lovemore and Damaris.*]

Clod. Damaris! Where art thou, *Damaris*?

Enter Brittle.

Brit. I heard my Wife steal softly down Stairs, and got my Clothes on as fast as I could, and follow'd her.—Where can the Baggage be?

Clod. Why *Damaris*, I say——O! art thou there? Thy Mistress says her Husband's very safe; he snores like any Devil: He little thinks his Wife and Mr. *Lovemore* are together now: I'd give a Crown to hear what the Cuckold dreams of; certainly, 'twou'd be worth laughing at: For my Part, I think my Master does him too much Honour, and he's an impudent Fellow to think to keep her only to himself: Why do'st thou not speak to me, *Damaris*? Let's follow 'em; and give me thy pretty little Fist that I may kiss it: ah, how sweet it is! Methinks I am eating Sugar-plumbs.—[*Brittle gives him a Slap on the Face.*]—O fye, what do'st thou mean by that? I do not take this for a Favour.

Brit. Who's there?

Clod. Nobody, Sir, nobody.

[*Exit.*]

Brit. He's gone, but has informed me who my treacherous Wife is with: Once more I'll send for her Parents; I hope I shall convince 'em now, and get their Consents to be divorc'd from her.—Ho, *Jeremy*

——*Jeremy*——

Jer. [*Above.*] Did you call, Sir?

Brit. Yes; come down quickly, Sirrah.

Jer. Here I am, Sir; I don't know who cou'd come quicker.

Brit. O! are you there?

Jer. Yes, Sir——[*Half asleep.*]

Brit. Hift, Sirrah, softly.—Look you, go to my Father and Mother-in-law, and tell 'em, I desire they'd come hither, instantly—d'ye hear, *Jeremy*?—*Jeremy!* *Jeremy!* [*While Brittle speaks, Jeremy stands half asleep and nodding.*]

Jer. Sir—[*Snoring.*]

Brit. Why, where are you, Sirrah

Jer.

THE WANTON WIFE. 25

Jer. Here, Sir.—[*Groping.*]

Brit. O, that's well; I say, go immediately to my Father and Mother-in-law, and give 'em my humble Service, and tell 'em that something has happen'd—(d'ye hear)—and desire 'em to come hither instantly. [*As Brittle is speaking, he takes hold of Jeremy's Cap, who falls down, and leaves his Cap in Brittle's Hand*] Ha! Why don't you answer, Sirrah? [*Strikes under the Cap at his Ear.*] *Jeremy?* Why, what, is the Devil run away with him? *Jeremy?*

Jer. Here, Sir. [*On the Ground.*]

Brit. Here, you Rascal! If I come to you, I'll—[*offering to go, tumbles over him.*] Oh, damn'd Regie! he has murder'd me. Sirrah, come hither, or I'll beat you to death.

Jer. Ay, but won't you beat me, if I do?

Brit. Come hither, I tell you.

Jer. Um——but you'll beat me.

Brit. O this provoking Dog! I tell you I won't beat you, Booby.

Jer. Ah! but won't you, indeed?

Brit. I won't, indeed — O senseless Cür — Come nearer — go to my Father and Mother-in-law, and pray 'em to come hither instantly; tell 'em it is a Business of the greatest Importance to me in the World: If you find them unwilling, desire 'em to come this once and I'll ne'er trouble 'em more——d'ye hear?

Jer. Yes, Sir, I am gone.

[*Exit.*]

Enter Lovemore, Wife, Clodpole and Damaris.

Brit. Who comes here? O! 'tis my hopeful Wife and her Gallant. I'll make Use of the Darkness of the Night, and hear what 'tis they say.

Wife. I must begone; my Husband may wake and miss me.

Love. Will you leave me so soon?

C

Wife.

26. THE WANTON WIFE.

Wife. We have had Discourse enough for the first Time.

Love. I have not told you Half I had to say.

Wife. Farewel; another Time you shall tell me.

Love. When I consider you leave me to go to your Husband, it distracts me; the Privilege a Husband has is Death to any Lover, Madam.

Wife. Are you so weak to be disturbed at that! Do you think all Women love their Husbands, Sir? We often depend on Parents, who mind nothing but Wealth; they force us to obey 'em, and marry whom they please, not whom we love; but commonly we are even with 'em, for we use 'em as they deserve.

Brit. Ah, poor Husbands! what slippery Devils do we take into our Bosoms!

Love. He is not worthy to be your Husband, Madam! 'Twas Cruelty to marry you to so mean a Fellow; Heaven never meant you for a Citizen's Wife.

Brit. If Heaven had made her thine, thou would'st have had thy Belly full: I have heard enough—I'll in. [Exit.

Dam. If you have any more to say of your Husband, Madam, dispatch, for 'tis late.

Love. Now thou art cruel, *Damaris*.

Wife. I must begone: Farewel, Sir.

Love. Since you will have it so, I must obey; but I beseech you, Madam, consider what Torments I endure, that I must leave you.

Clod. Where art thou, *Damaris*?

Dam. I am here; farewel.

Love. I'll now go to my Viscount at the Tavern: Follow me, *Clodpole*. [Exeunt.

Wife. Are they gone, *Damaris*?

Dam. Yes, Madam.

Wife. Let us go in again, and make no Noise.

Dam. O Heavens! what shall we do? the Door's Lock'd, Madam.

Wife. Lock'd! call *Jeremy* to open it—call softly.

Dam.

Dam. Jeremy—Jeremy
Brittle above.

Brit. Jeremy—Jeremy—ah ha! have I caught you, my fine Lady Wife? I am glad to see you abroad at this Time of the Night, sweet Madam.

Wife. What Hurt is it to take the fresh Air of the Evening?

Brit. Alas! none in the World; 'tis the properest Time you could have chosen for't — to take the Air! — No, 'twas rather to take a Heat, you Witch you: I know your whole Plot, Gentlewoman: I heard how sweetly you and your impudent Gallant sung out my Praise—but 'tis my Comfort now I shall be reveng'd; I shall now convince your Father and Mother that my Complaints were just: Now they shall see what a disorderly Life you lead, they'll be here presently.

Wife. What shall we do now, Damaris?

Brit. A ha! what, is your Prompter to Wickedness struck dumb? This was an Accident you did not look for: I triumph, Madam, now; now I shall bring down your Pride, and destroy all your little Artifices: Hitherto you manag'd your Roguery so cunningly, nothing that I cou'd say wou'd be believ'd; but now (Thanks to my Stars) all your Plots will be laid open, to your lasting Shame.

Wife. Pray, Husband, let the Door be open'd for me.

Brit. No, no; you shall e'en stay there 'till your Parents come; they shall see what Hours you keep; in the mean Time think of some Trick — can't you think of some Trick now to deliver you from this damnable Adventure? Make 'em believe (if you can) that I wrong you still; that this nocturnal Pilgrimage was but a Sally to a Neighbour's Labour or so.

Wife. No, indeed, Husband, I'll disguise nothing from you; I'll not defend myself, or deny any thing.

28 THE WANTON WIFE.

Brit. Ah! 'tis because you have no Hope to invent any thing that will be now believ'd.

Wife. I confess I'm to blame; you have Cause to be angry with me; but I beseech you do not expose me to my Parents' Fury.

Brit. I kiss your Hand, fair Madam.

Wife. Dear Husband, I beseech you.

Brit. Ah! now you are caught, I am your dear Husband, am I? You never us'd such kind Words to me before.

Wife. Trust me, I'll never give you Cause to complain of me again.

Brit. You'd as good say nothing — that's all one: Farewel.

Wife. Pray stay, hear me but one Word before you go.

Brit. Well—and pray what have you to say now?

Wife. I confess I have been to blame, that all your Complaints were just, I watch'd till you were asleep to meet that Gentleman you speak of: But sure you may pardon little Failings in one so young as I am, that have scarce seen any thing of the World; that may fall into a Frailty, and yet think no Harm.

Brit. In good Time—'Twou'd be a notable Proof of my Charity, indeed, should I believe you.

Wife. I do not say I am altogether guiltless, I only pray you to forget a Fault I heartily repent of, and ask your Pardon for. If you grant me this, you'll gain more upon me than all my Parents' Anger, or the Bonds of Marriage can ever have Power to do; in a Word, it shall make me renounce all Company and Courtship, nay, you shall find me the most obedient Wife in the whole World — I protest, Dear, 'tis you, and only you I love.

Brit. Ah! wheedling Crocodile.

Wife. Will you not believe me, then?

Brit. No.

Wife. Let me intreat you.

Brit.

Brit. No.

Wife. As you love Heaven.

Brit. No ! I'll have the World see what you are.

Wife. If you make me desperate, know a Woman in that Condition is capable of doing any thing.

Brit. Ha, ha, ha ! what will your sweet Ladyship do ?

Wife. That which you may repent of ; I'll kill myself with this Knife, if you deny me.

(Holding her Fan like a Dagger.

Brit. Very good—

Wife. 'Twill not be so good as you imagine neither : When I am dead no one will doubt but that you were my Murderer ; my Parents will never let my Death go unreveng'd ; they will pursue you with all Severity, that Law or Friends will suffer 'em, consider of it ; I am not the first Wife that has kill'd herself to be reveng'd of a cruel, heardhearted Husband.

Brit. O ! your Servant ; killing one's Self has been long out of Fashion, Madam.

Wife. Assure yourself I'll do it, if you persist in your Refusal, and don't open the Door immediately.

Brit. Adad, I'll trust you : I shall not be frighted with this Trick.

Wife. If you 'scape the Law, my Ghost shall haunt you for it.

Brit. Ah ! if I were but rid of your Person now, I shou'd not much fear your Ghost hereafter.

Wife. I am just doing it.

Brit. It may be so ; but yet, methinks, you are a plaguy while about it.

Dam. Hold, Madam—you cannot be in Earnest.

Brit. No, no, I warrant her.

Wife. Stand off, I'll kill thee else — there —

Dam. Ah, she has don't—she has don't—

Wife. So — now you find too late, I did not jest ; you can witness, *Damaris*, who was my Murderer ;

30 THE WANTON WIFE.

commend me to my Parents ; tell 'em my last Request is, that they will see my Death reveng'd upon my cruel Husband.

Dam. She's gone ! she's gone ! O jealous Monster ! to murder so sweet a Creature ! I'll to her Father and Mother instantly ; my Witness will be enough to hang you ; you were the Cause of her Death ; and I may with a safe Conscience swear 'twas you that did it.

Brit. All's very still : Is it possible she can be so malicious to kill herself only to have me hang'd ?—I'll light a Candle and come down immediately.

(Comes down.)

Wife. Damaris ?

Dam. Madam.

Wife. Come hither, and stand up close by me.

Enter *Brittle* with a Light.

(As he enters they slip in and shut the Door.)

Brit. Can a Woman's Wickedness extend so far to murder herself and damn her Soul, only to be reveng'd on me ? Ah ! here's nobody : I might have believ'd this at first, when the cunning Quean found neither Prayers nor Threats wou'd work upon me, she ran away : Better and better still ; this will convince her Parents with a Vengeance, and render her odious to the whole World——Ha ! how the Duce came this Door lock'd ?—Open the Door there quickly.

Wife and *Damaris* above.

Wife. Away, you drunken Sot ; get you to the Tavern from whence you came : Is this an Hour to come home in ? Is this a Life for an honest Man to lead ?

Brit. How's this ! have you——

Wife.

THE WANTON WIFE.

Wife. Go, go, base Man ; I am weary on't ; I'll endure it no longer ; I'll complain to my Father and Mother on't.

Brit. Have you the Impudence to say all this to my very Face ?

Enter *Jeremy* with a Paper-lantern ; *Sir Peter* and *Lady*, under an Umbrella.

Wife. I beseech you, Sir, and you, dear Madam, to come hither, and do me Justice on a Husband whom Jealousy and Wine have quite distracted ; he neither knows what he does nor what he says : he has sent for you himself to witness the greatest Piece of Extravagance that ever yet was heard of : There he stands, just now come from the Tavern, Madam :— How many Nights do I sit up for him !

Brit. Was there ever such a Devil !

Wife. If you hearken to him, he'll tell you he's the most injur'd Man in the whole City ; that whilst he slept, I stole away from him to meet a Gentleman ; and a thousand idle Stories of the same Nature, Sir.

Dam. Yes, Madam ; he would fain have made us believe that he was in the House and we abroad : This Folly he's so strangely possess'd with, you can hardly now beat it out of his Head.

Lady. 'Tis the strangest Impudence in the whole World to call us out of our Beds at this Time of the Night.

Brit. I must confess I never saw so much Impudence before.

Sir Pet. What is your Meaning, Son, to use us thus ?

Wife. O ! my dear Father, I'm weary of my Life, and can no longer endure such a wicked Husband ; my Patience is tir'd ; he has said a thousand injurious Things to me beside.

Sir Pet.

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Sir Pet. Troth, Son, you're a very unworthy Fellow : Do not anger me any more — Do not, I say.

Dam. Truly, Sir, 'tis a Shame to see a pretty Gentlewoman us'd thus : All the Neighbours take Notice on't, nay, it calls to Heaven for Vengeance on him.

Brit. Can I endure all this ! Pray, Sir, hear me but speak two Words.

Wife. Pray hear him, Sir.

Dam. He has drank so much, nobody can endure him : Methinks I smell him hither.

Brit. I shall run mad — Father-in-law, I conjure you.

Sir Pet. Stand farther off — You smell of Wine most intolerably.

Brit. Madam, I shall entreat you —

Lady. Out upon him ; his Breath's infectious ; 'tis enough to make one sick.

Brit. Let me but tell you only —

Sir Pet. Keep farther off, I say ; I can't endure you.

Brit. Pray, Madam, give me Leave —

Lady. Away, away ; your Breath, Son, turns my Stomach.

Brit. Well then, if you'll hear me, I'll stand farther off — I swear to you I have not been out of my House to-night, nor three Minutes out of my Bed : 'Twas she that was abroad.

Wife. Now, Madam, did I not tell you he'd say this before ?

Dam. You see what Likelihood there is of this !

Brit. I call all the Stars to witness I was in my House — and that —

Lady. Hold your Tongue — your Folly's inseparable.

Brit. May I be thunder-struck immediately, if I were out of my House.

Sir Pet.

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Sir Pet. Come, trouble us no more, but ask her Pardon.

Brit. I ask her Pardon!

Lady. Yes, you; and presently you were best—

Brit. What, she offends, and I must ask—

Sir Pet. Do not expostulate with me, lest you repent it.

Brit. Ah! *Bornaby Brittle*, what hast thou brought thyself to!

Lady. Daughter, come down.

Sir Pet. Make Haste, that your Husband may ask your Pardon before we go.

Lady. I'll pull down your stubborn Heart—I'll teach you what it is to abuse a Gentlewoman so.

Enter *Wife* and *Damaris*.

Come, Clown, and ask your Wife Forgiveness, quickly.

Wife. Shall I forgive him, Madam? No; 'tis impossible! I desire to be divorc'd from him.

Sir Pet. Daughter, such Separations are scandalous: Tho' he's so foolish to desire it, yet you ought to be wiser, Child: Have Patience, and try him once again.

Wife. After so many Affronts, can I endure him longer?

Sir Pet. You must: I command you do it.

Wife. That stops my Mouth: Your Power is absolute.—Come, Dear, give me your Hand; we will be Friends: I ask your Pardon for so long imposing on your Patience; but I have seen my Error, and will henceforward make it my Study to please.

Brit. Well—I may as well be quiet, and take her at her Word: This Change in her Behaviour may set all to rights—She can't be worse, that's one Comfort.

Patience, long Time, has been the Husband's Cure; For what we cannot mend, we must endure.—Wives at the best, they say, are but an Evil, But WANTON WIVES are sure the very Devil.

F I N I S.



